

Q&A

New Policies on Responsibilities and Ownership and on Privacy

Q 1. What are the new policies?

A. In an effort to both protect examinee privacy and establish formal notification regarding ownership of tests, scores, and other data, the GED Testing Service® (GEDTS) has developed the following documents:

- POLICY ON RESPONSIBILITIES OF GED EXAMINEES and OWNERSHIP OF TESTS, SCORES, and OTHER DATA
- PRIVACY POLICY

The policy on responsibilities and ownership describes ownership of test-related materials and the consequences of violating the property rights of GED Testing Service. It also states that GED Testing Service owns the GEDTS International Database, and that individual jurisdictions have the right to access and use their testing program's data (subject, of course, to any applicable privacy laws). The privacy policy specifies that personally identifiable information an examinee provides when registering for the GED Tests is not made available to third parties without the examinee's permission. Exceptions are noted for cases of research and legal proceedings.

Q 2. What are the policies designed to do?

A. These are important policies. They describe the organization's views and procedures relating to the ownership of test materials and data, and the handling of information collected from testing program candidates. They set standards for the organization to abide by, and they inform examinees of their rights and responsibilities.

Q 3. When will new policies go into effect?

A. The new policies will go into effect on November 1, 2008.

Q 4. How are the policies new?

A. The policy statements themselves are new. In the past GEDTS has not required all candidates to read and acknowledge policy statements on ownership rights, examinee responsibilities, and privacy.

Q 5. Since the new policy statements inform candidates of their rights and responsibilities as of November 1, 2008, does that mean GEDTS has not respected the rights of past candidates?

A. GEDTS has not required candidates to read and comply with privacy policy statements in all jurisdictions before. However, most jurisdictions already have privacy procedures, policies, or regulations in place. Jurisdictions also regularly make it their practice not to release information to third parties without a candidate's written consent and follow local and national laws related to privacy.

- Q 6. When do candidates need to read the policy statements?
- A. As part of the pre-registration process, candidates need to read both policies *prior to* completing the demographic form. Policy statements could be included along with other materials routinely gathered for pre-registration. Candidates do not necessarily need to keep a copy of the policies; however, since their signature indicates they have read the policies, a copy of the policies need to be available to candidates.
- Q 7. How can I get copies of the policy statements?
- A. Policies are available from the GED Testing Center or the jurisdiction GED Administrator. Policies are also available online at www.GEDtest.org.
- Q 8. Are the policy statements available in languages other than English?
- A. Yes, the policy statements are also available in Spanish and French.
- Q 9. Are the policy statements available for individuals who need specific accommodations?
- A. The policy statements are available online at www.GEDtest.org, and individuals with disabilities could access them using accommodations that are available for other types of web access. Administrators should also work with examiners to identify additional ways for access, such as reading the policy statements aloud for individuals with visual impairments.

Changes to the Demographic Forms

- Q 1. Why were changes made to the demographic forms at this time?
- A. In order for the candidate to acknowledge reading the privacy policy and to indicate whether the candidate agreed to participate in future research, changes to the candidate's verification (box 50 on the US forms and box 46 on the Canadian forms) were necessary. All changes have been made with the intent of avoiding any effect on scanning programs.
- Q 2. How much will the new demographic forms cost?
- A. The price will not change; it will remain \$10 per package of 50. In early November testing centers that have existing stock will be notified about receiving replacements in November and December. Forms will be replaced at no charge.
- Q 3. How much of the current stock of demographic forms will be replaced free of charge?

- A. Testing centers are encouraged to use existing demographic forms by the end of 2008. Testing centers that have existing stock will be notified about the number of replacements in early November.
- Q 4. I have a lot of “old” demographic forms and my testing centers can’t afford to buy new ones. Who will pay for the new ones?
- A. Testing centers are encouraged to use existing demographic forms by the end of 2008. Forms will be replaced at no charge.
- Q 5. How can we distinguish the new demographic form from the previous form?
- A. Several changes will help staff identify the newest forms. The color of each form has changed. For example, the US English demographic form is now green, and the Canadian French demographic form is now purple. The form also includes the GED® logo and a heading with a border around it.
- Q 6. Do the changes apply to all versions of the demographic form?
- A. Yes, all five versions – US English, French, and Spanish and Canadian English and French – have been changed.
- Q 7. Will the scanning of the new demographic forms change and do I need to contact my scoring site and/or administrator?
- A. Scoring sites and administrators have also been notified about the changes. The demographic forms have been slightly modified to capture that the examinee has read and agrees to the policies. This modification occurs in box 50 on U.S. Demographics forms (English, French, and Spanish) and box 46 on Canadian Demographics forms (English and French). However, the other bubbles remain the same. As a result, the scanning of the new demographic forms will not be affected.
- Q 8. Will all the other questions on the demographic forms stay the same?
- A. Yes, all the other questions will remain the same.
- Q 9. What are administrators’ major responsibilities for the change of new policies?
- A. Administrators can help ensure a successful transition to use of the new form by sharing with their staff and with examiners how to apply the “Actions To Be Taken” steps described in the memo from GED Testing Service about the policy change and the new demographic form. Testing centers will receive information concerning replacement forms in November 2008.
- Q 10. When will the new forms be available?
- A. Replacement orders will be processed in late November and early December 2008. All 2009 contract orders for demographics will receive the new forms.
- Q 11. Whom should I contact to get these new forms?

A. Any orders processed for the new contract year will automatically receive the new forms. To order additional forms, please follow the normal ordering procedures. Contact jacqueline_newton@ace.nche.edu if you need an additional order form.

Q 12. Once testing centers have the new forms, what should they do with the old ones?

A. Old forms must be disposed as of January 1, 2009. Please do *not* send them back to GED Testing Service.

Q 13. What if a testing center happens to use the “old” demographic form after January 1st?

A. GED Testing Service will monitor use of forms during 2009. Testing centers that consistently fail to comply in using the new form will receive a warning letter. If centers that receive a warning letter still fail to comply, a monitoring team will visit the center and investigate, in a process comparable to that of investigating a test compromise.

Q 14. What if my jurisdiction/scoring site already uses a unique demographic form instead of the GEDTS demographic form?

A. Jurisdictions, scoring sites, and/or testing centers may continue to use existing non-GEDTS demographic forms as long as the candidate receives copies of the policy statements and signs an assurance with the same wording used in box 50 (US demographic forms)/ box 46 (Canadian demographic forms).